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The Georg Sverdrup Society

NEWSLETTER

2023 Annual Meeting to Be Held in Plymouth, MN

In this Issue:

2023 Annual Meeting in Plymouth, MN	1
The 2023 Sverdrup Journal	1
Report on 2023 Summer Forum	2
From "The Harvest and the Laborers"	3
Aims and Activities of the Society	4

You are invited to the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Georg Sverdrup Society, to be held in Heritage Hall on the campus of the Free Lutheran Schools in Plymouth, Minnesota. The event is scheduled for Saturday, October 14, beginning with a catered lunch at 12 noon. The program follows lunch at 1:00 p.m. and includes a Sverdrup Songfest, the reading of a recent translation, and our keynote speaker, Dr. Stanley Quanbeck, who will share about missions to Madagascar, a cause that was very important to Sverdrup. The annual business meeting will

follow at approximately 2:00 p.m., at which officers will be elected for the coming year. Available at this year's annual meeting are new

maroon cases for storing and displaying *The Sverdrup Journal* on your bookshelf for \$15 each.



The 2023 Sverdrup Journal

Georg Sverdrup

- Born to Pastor Harold Ulrich Sverdrup and his wife Caroline Metella, nee Suur, at Balestrand, Sogn, Norway, on December 16, 1848.
- Died on May 3, 1907, in Minneapolis, MN, and buried in the Lakewood Cemetery

Georg Sverdrup's vision of "free and living congregations" required a unique program of pastoral training that Sverdrup sought to put in place at Augsburg Seminary. Sverdrup called this program *Menighedsmaesig Pres- teuddannelse*, that is, "congregationally-oriented pastoral training." According to Robert Lee, Sverdrup sought to "form and equip . . . pastors who were committed not merely to keeping the machinery running, or dominating members with an undue emphasis on correct doc-

trine, but to proclaiming 'the full counsel of God so that *all* of the members might call forth and use the gifts God has given for mutual edification and the spread of His kingdom.'" (see "Sverdrup's Plan of Pastoral Training for the Congregation" in the 2009 *Sverdrup Journal*, p. 9).

The *Sverdrup Journal* explored Sverdrup's plan for pastoral training in two previous volumes: Volume 6, "Sverdrup and Pastoral Education," and Volume 15, "Sverdrup and Augsburg Seminary."

The 2023 *Sverdrup Journal* will again take up the issue of pastors for the congregation, focusing specifically on the reason for Sverdrup's program of pastoral training: his understanding of the office of ministry. The office of ministry, Sverdrup believed, is not an office above the congregation where an intellectual and spiritual elite rule over the congregation. No, the office of ministry is an office *within* the congregation where the pastor serves

(Continued on page 3)

Report on the 2023 GSS Summer Forum at Clarion, IA

The 2023 Georg Sverdrup Summer Forum was held on July 22 at Holmes Lutheran Church in Clarion, Iowa. No attendance count was taken, but it was estimated at about 25 people.

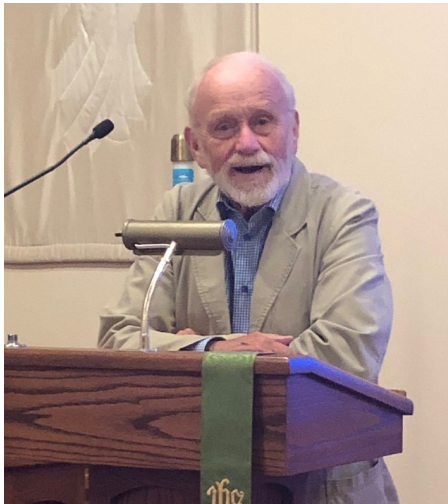
The meeting was opened a few minutes after 9:00 a.m. by Georg Sverdrup Society president Brian Lunn. He introduced the first speaker, *Journal* editor Mr. Larry Walker. Larry delivered a PowerPoint presentation on "Augsburg Seminary and the Lutheran Free Church." His lecture described the historical background for the story of Augsburg and the rise of Free Lutheranism. The talk was illustrated with historical photos and gave special emphasis to the importance of lay activity in Professor Sverdrup's thought.

After refreshments served by the Holmes Lutheran women, Mr. Loiell Dyrud delivered a presentation on the Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church. He examined those principles, stressing the importance of always remembering that the LFC was not a synod, and neither is the AFLC, but rather a free association. Neither the association offices nor the Annual Conference have any authority to dictate to congregations in any way. He noted how the loss of understanding of the Fundamental Principles contributed to the loss of free church status in the Lutheran Free Church. He particularly recommended the booklet *The Gospel in the Congregation: A Study of the AFLC Fundamental Principles*, recently published by Ambassador Publications, for congregational study. He urged that users not rush through it at a rate of one chapter a week, but rather spend time on each chapter.

The 11:00 a.m. session was led by Dr. Martin Horn, speaking on "Free and Living Congregations." Dr. Horn apologized for not having time to deal with the subject in depth. He concentrated on the concept of the free congregation, linking it to the vision of the congregation as the



Left: Mr. Larry Walker spoke on "Augsburg Seminary and the Lutheran Free Church."



Below left: Mr. Loiell Dyrud spoke on the Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church.

Below: Dr. Martin Horn spoke on "Free and Living Congregations."



bride of Christ. It was an inspiring meditation and very well received.

The meeting closed with prayer at noon.

After a delicious lunch served by the Holmes Lutheran women, the Georg Sverdrup Society board held its summer meeting.

Many thanks are extended to Pastor George Lautner and all the people of the Holmes congregation, who made us very welcome on a beautiful summer day.

—Larry J. Walker

The 2023 Sverdrup Journal (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

the congregation through the proclamation of the life-giving Word.

The theme of the 2023 *Journal* is “Sverdrup and the Office of Ministry.” The *Journal* will include articles by three authors. Terry Olson will contribute “The Heart of the Servant Pastor.” Olson has served congregations in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations for fifty years, and he has a deep interest in the role of the pastor as servant of the congregation.

Loiell Dyrud will contribute “Pioneer Pastor Elias Aas: Bringing the Gospel to Norwegian Immigrants in the Red River Valley.” Having graduated from Augsburg Seminary in 1886, Aas demonstrated the “congregationally-oriented pastoral training” he had been

taught while serving congregations in Minnesota and North Dakota.

In “Sverdrup and Walther on the Office of Ministry,” Steve Mundfrom will compare Sverdrup’s understanding of the Office of Ministry with that of C. F. W. Walther, the leading theologian of the Missouri Synod in the 1800s.

The 2023 *Journal* will also include several translations from Sverdrup’s writings that address the issue of the pastoral office. These will largely be excerpts from commencement addresses he gave while president of Augsburg College and Seminary.

—Martin L. Horn



*Augsburg Seminary Faculty, circa 1880.
Credit: Augsburg University Archive.*

From “The Harvest and the Laborers”

Both pastors and congregations in this country have to take care of many and significant things for the building up of the kingdom among us, both internally and externally. But “one thing is necessary” [Luke 10:42]. The salvation of one soul is more precious than all the treasures of the world. Oh, let us unite ourselves anew in prayer that the power of the Spirit of God may be poured out over us, that we may be filled with new, sincere love for souls and burning zeal for their salvation, so that we could lay aside all other things and go out in Jesus’ name, just as He sent His apostles, to “seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel” [Matthew 10:6]. Behold the dogs, behold the cutting in pieces, behold

the evil workers! Behold the world’s power and lust, which reigns over the great masses, strips them and makes them miserable —and begins to cry from the throat: “Land, land, land! Hear the word of the LORD! Return, O faithless children, I will heal your faithlessness, says the LORD” [Jeremiah 22:29 and 3:22]. Oh, that God’s servants especially would be determined not to let themselves be content with preaching the Word from the pulpit, but [that they would] go to the individuals, not only when they are sick and dying and ask for him, often in fleshly fear and superstition, but [that they would go] to the healthy, powerful, confident sinners, spiritually lame, cripples and lep-

rous, on the crossroads and street corners and compel them to come in. That there could be a new time, an awakening time, and springtime, when the turtledove lets loose its song, and from the prairies and the forests in this country among our people from one end to the other, this prophet’s answer may come like a mighty Pentecost wind:

“Behold, we come to You, for You are the LORD our God!” [Jeremiah 3:22].

But if that would be so, then it is necessary to “beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest” [Matthew 9:38], men of good reputation, full of the

(Continued on page 4)



THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Ordet Blev Kjød

(The Word Became Flesh)

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Martin Horn, Vice President
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Kris Nyman, Treasurer
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Steve Mundfrom
Carl Fiskness

Larry Walker, Editor
Loiell Dyrud, Assistant Editor

Prospective members are invited
to contact the treasurer at the
above address.

The Georg Sverdrup Society was organized in December 2003 and is open to anyone interested in the life and work of noted Norwegian-American theologian Georg Sverdrup (1848-1907). The society is registered in the State of Minnesota as a 501 (C)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its activities, which are guided by a seven-member board of directors, include:

- Promoting the study and understanding of the New Testament congregation as understood and explained by Georg Sverdrup;
- Endeavoring to advance the ideal of “free and living congregations” as envisioned by Sverdrup;
- Seeking to foster further translation of Sverdrup’s writings into English;
- Encouraging the study and application of the “Fundamental Principles” and “Rules for Work” as used in the Lutheran Free Church and as continuing to be used in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations;
- Enlarging the interest in Sverdrup’s works by organizing discussion groups and providing speakers on request;
- Operating a **Sverdrup Society** website linked to <www.aflc.org> for members of the Society and others interested in the life and work of Georg Sverdrup;
- Maintaining a current bibliography of Sverdrup’s translated work as well as a current bibliography of materials written about him;
- Publishing a newsletter for members that provides information on the Society’s activities as well as general information about Georg Sverdrup;
- And encouraging research and study of Sverdrup’s life and work by publishing an annual **Sverdrup Journal**.

From “The Harvest and the Laborers” (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

Spirit and of wisdom [Acts 6:3], earnest, zealous, God-fearing pastors. Of them, we always need more and more.

Many do not seriously consider what spiritual need there is in the places around us; souls languish from lack of the preaching of God’s Word. We are inclined to settle down and thank God because we have it so good, so that others have to try to help themselves. Oh, that God had dealt in this way with us!

When we consider that, not only whole settlements are every year without the service of the Word of God from God-fearing pastors, but that also many servants of God must work themselves to death in order to get to their many congregations every three or four weeks with the Word and the sacraments, then certainly many of us

should wake up and bring to mind the poor souls who are asleep and the Lord’s admonition, “beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest” [Matthew 9:38].

The one who sincerely *prays* will also *work*, and that is what is needed. Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us not be weary when we do what is good; let us wake up and get to work with renewed power and be zealous for training the children in the fear of God and for establishing and preserving schools for the education of living men—men filled with and driven by the Spirit of God to go out among the languishing crowds and cry out:

“Return, O faithless children, I will heal your faithlessness,” says the LORD” [Jeremiah 3:22].

Behold Him, the blessed Savior; behold Him, who “had compassion on the people”; behold Him, who hung on the cross

for you and was compassionate, not in word, but in deed, and know that just as He has done for you, just as He has prayed, worked, and suffered, so He wills that you should do for those “languishing and scattered sheep,” whom He has redeemed with His blood. Will you?

Source: *Aand og Liv* [Spirit and Life] published in 1898 under both Georg Sverdrup’s and Sven Oftedal’s names. The sermon is for Septuagesima Sunday, based on Matthew 9:36-10:7, pp. 70-71. Translation by Brian Lunn, who believes the sermon was written by Sverdrup.